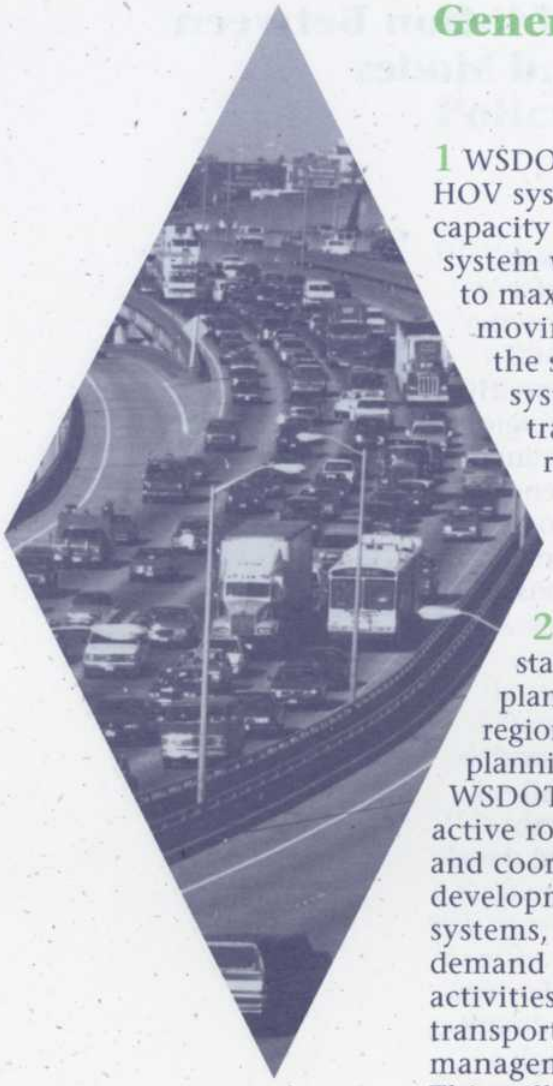
General HOV Policy Statement



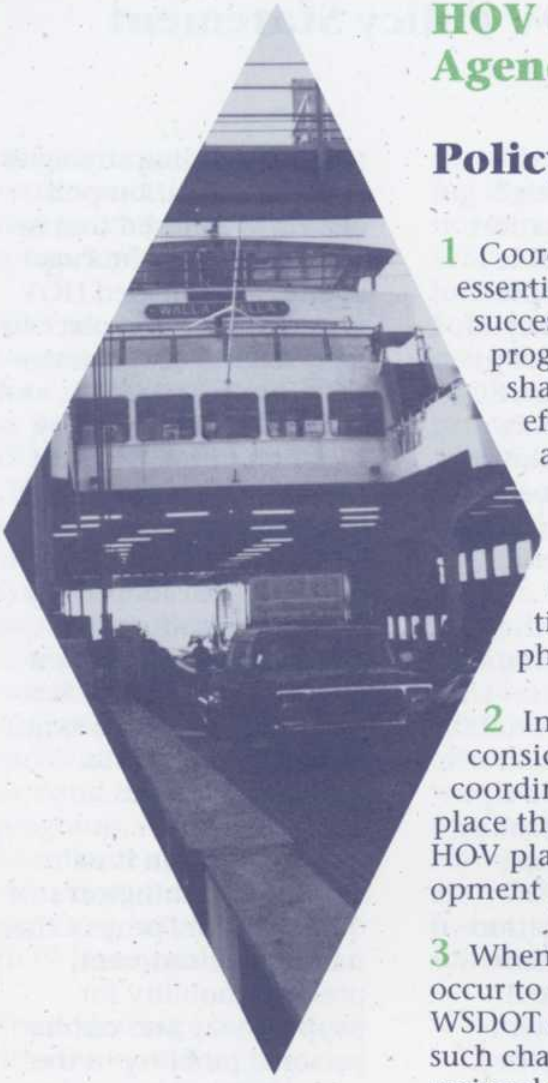
1 WSDOT regards the HOV system as a high capacity transportation system whose goal is to maximize people moving capability of the state highway system, mitigate transportation-related pollution and reduce dependency on fossil fuels.

2 Through the state transportation planning process and regional transportation planning organizations, WSDOT shall take a proactive role in promoting and coordinating the development of HOV systems, transportation demand management activities and related transportation system management activities. This will be accomplished through support of local jurisdictions and participation in their transportation and land-use planning efforts statewide.

3 WSDOT recognizes that an HOV system may not be the only high capacity transit system in a region depending on adopted regional funding strategies and transportation policies. It is believed that in regions such as the Puget Sound, a completed HOV system must be in place to meet federal environmental clean air standards, and support overall mobility needs and high capacity transportation systems of the future.

4 All policies adopted by WSDOT regarding this system shall be based on providing incentives for people to shift from single occupant vehicles to ridesharing modes.

5 WSDOT's aim is to enhance Washington's quality of life, protect the natural environment, preserve mobility for people today and ensure personal mobility in the year 2000 and beyond.



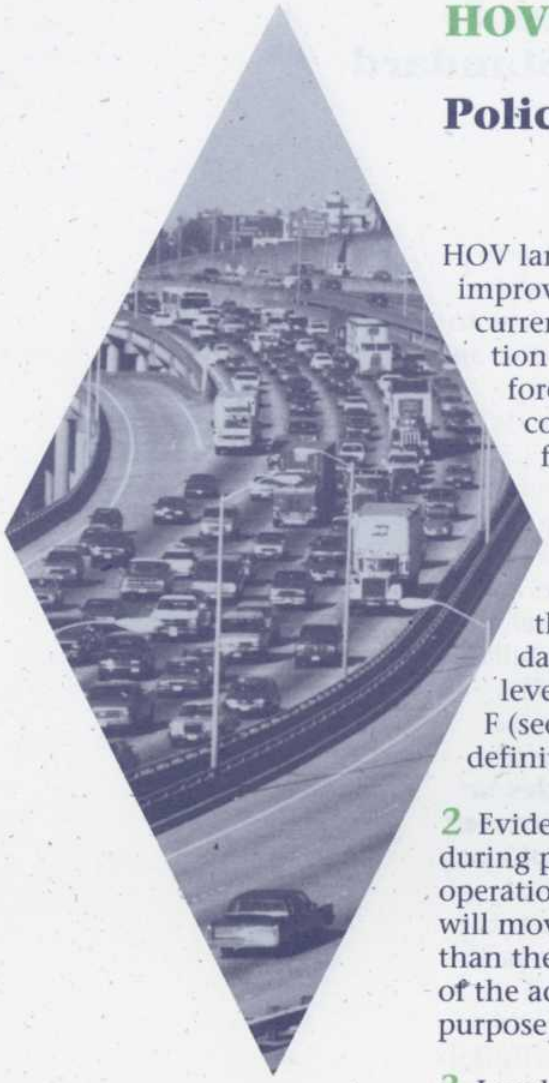
HOV Coordination Between Agencies and Modes

Policy

1 Coordination is an essential aspect of a successful HOV program. WSDOT shall coordinate HOV efforts with regional and local transportation agencies throughout the planning, design, construction and operation phases.

2 Intermodal considerations and coordination shall take place throughout the HOV planning and development phases.

3 When changes are to occur to the HOV System, WSDOT shall coordinate such change through a regional process, as designated by the Washington State Transportation Commission and described in *Washington's Transportation Plan*.



HOV Lane Minimum Thresholds

Policy

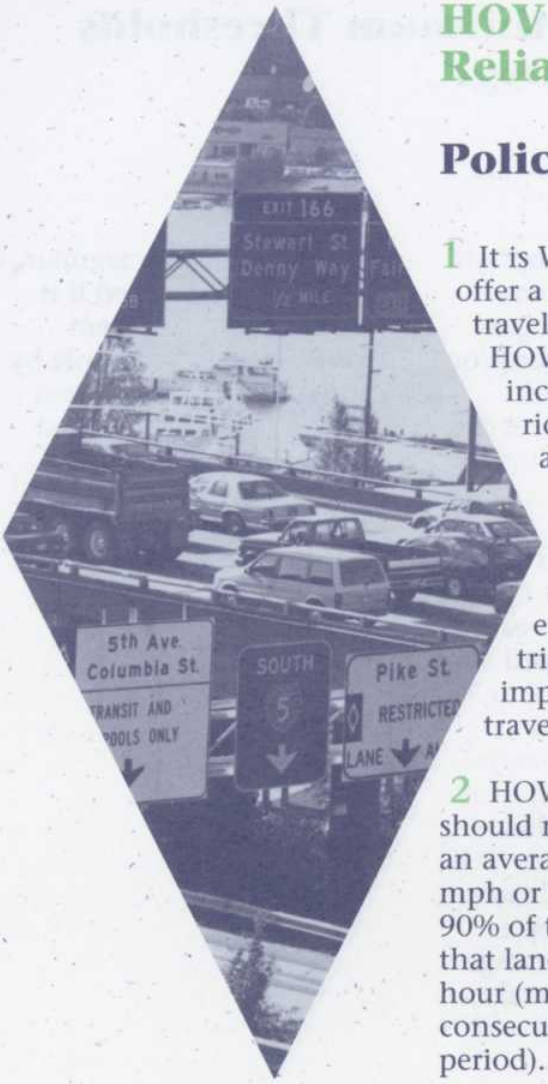
HOV lanes are appropriate improvements when current traffic congestion conditions and/or forecasted traffic congestion meet the following criteria:

1 Facility demand exceeds capacity for more than an hour each day as evidenced by level of service E or F (see *Glossary* for definition).

2 Evidence exists that during peak hours of operation, the HOV lane will move more people than the per lane average of the adjacent general purpose lanes.

3 Local support for construction of the HOV lane is demonstrated through active regional support or public surveys.

4 An HOV route segment may also be justified if it enhances HOV system continuity, for example by providing a link between HOV corridors identified in the *Freeway Core HOV Lane System* (see map, page 32).

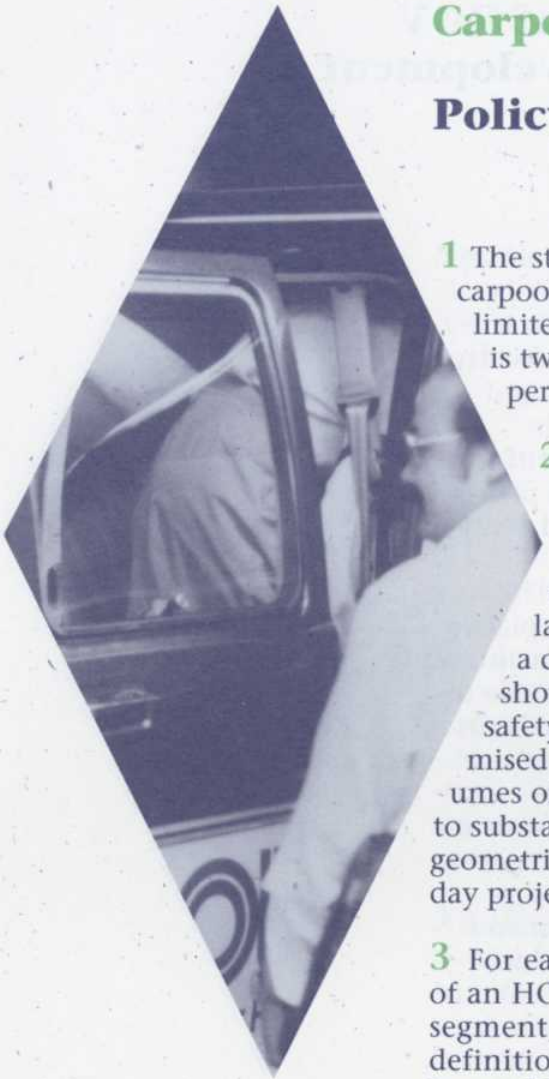


HOV Speed and Reliability Standard

Policy

1 It is WSDOT policy to offer a reliable speed and travel time advantage to HOVs, both to offer an incentive to use ridesharing modes and to enhance person carrying capacity into the future. For transit riders especially, a reliable trip time is equally as important as a fast travel speed.

2 HOV lane vehicles should maintain or exceed an average speed of 45 mph or greater at least 90% of the times they use that lane during the peak hour (measured for a consecutive six-month period).



Carpool Definition

Policy

1 The statewide base carpool definition for limited access freeways is two or more persons.

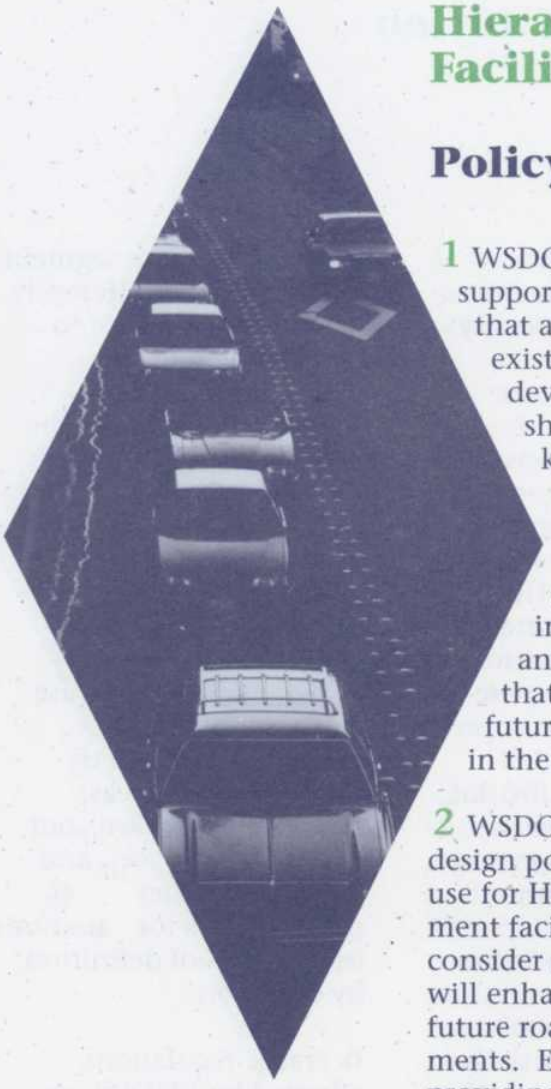
2 Exceptions to the base carpool definition may be made in cases where an HOV lane is operated on a converted roadway shoulder, or where safety may be compromised at higher volumes of HOV traffic due to substandard roadway geometrics or by opening day projected volumes.

3 For each new portion of an HOV route segment, the carpool definition shall initially be established during the preliminary engineering phase of the HOV project and shall be carried through the environmental and design report stages, allowing for public and interjurisdictional review and comment.

4 The carpool definition shall be consistent on a HOV route segment. HOV bypasses or ramps leading to the HOV route segment may be treated differently when it is beneficial to that immediate area.

5 Based on results of the HOV System Evaluation, the carpool definition may be increased to mitigate cases where the HOV Speed and Reliability policy is violated. The carpool definition may be decreased to the base definition if it can be demonstrated that the result would increase person volumes without violating the Speed and Reliability policy. This policy allows for variations in the carpool definition by direction.

6 Traffic regulations adopted by WSDOT on June 29, 1984, allow authorized vehicles and vehicles meeting the minimum occupancy definition to use state HOV facilities. Authorized vehicles include motorcycles, buses with 20 or more seats and public transportation vehicles as defined by state law.



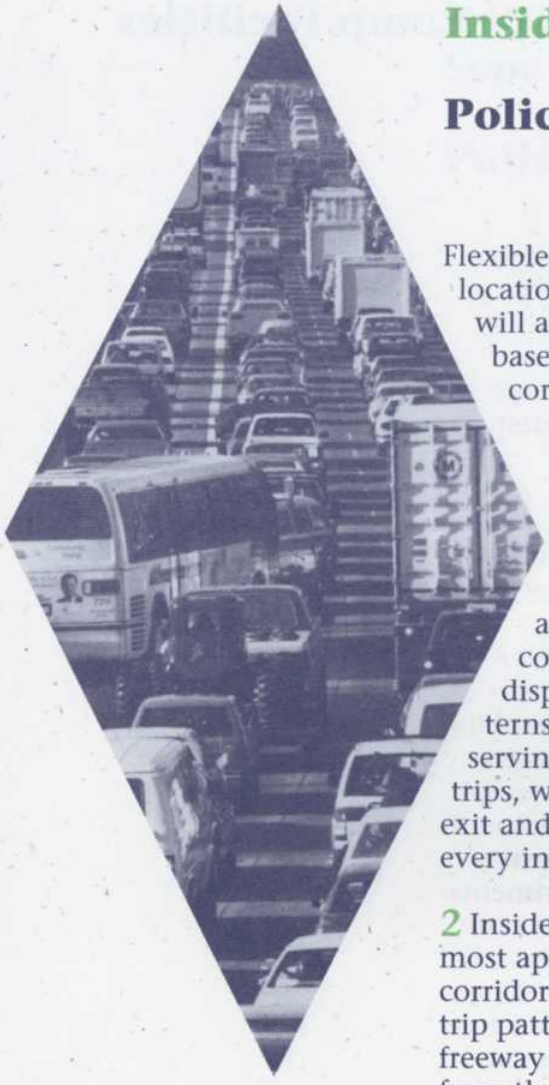
Hierarchy of HOV Facility Development

Policy

1 WSDOT recognizes and supports the concept that a logical hierarchy exists in HOV facility development and shall use this knowledge in statewide planning and analysis of HOV systems. The intent is to plan and design facilities that are amenable to future improvements in the hierarchy.

2 WSDOT shall review its design policies currently in use for HOV route segment facility design and consider options which will enhance and facilitate future roadway improvements. Examples include: providing right of way for future physically separated facilities, and including transit and other HOV facility access needs in design considerations and policy.

3 WSDOT shall establish financial strategies to cooperatively develop HOV support facilities which will best benefit a region's HOV system.



Inside Versus Outside HOV Lanes

Policy

Flexible criteria for the location of HOV lanes will allow for variations based on specific corridor needs.

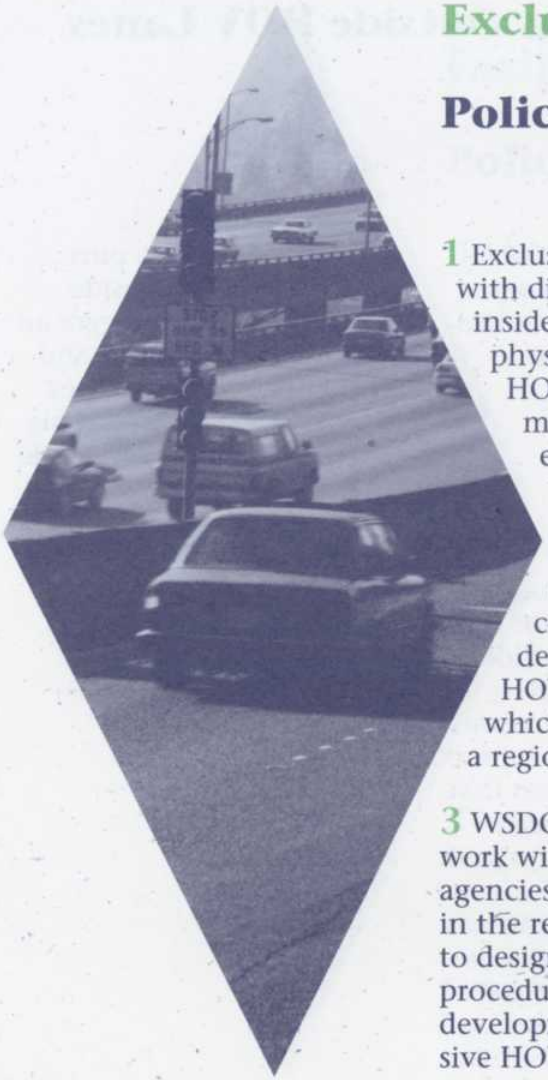
Generally speaking:

1 Outside HOV lanes are most appropriate for a corridor with widely dispersed trip patterns, such as a freeway serving suburb to suburb trips, with bus routes that exit and enter at nearly every interchange.

2 Inside HOV lanes are most appropriate for a corridor with concentrated trip patterns, such as a freeway serving trips to or from the central business district or very large activity center and characterized by express bus service.

3 The decision to pursue development of inside HOV lanes shall trigger an evaluation of transit and other HOV access issues within the corridor. This evaluation should include a comprehensive analysis of alternatives, such as provision of direct HOV lane access.

Exclusive HOV Ramp Facilities

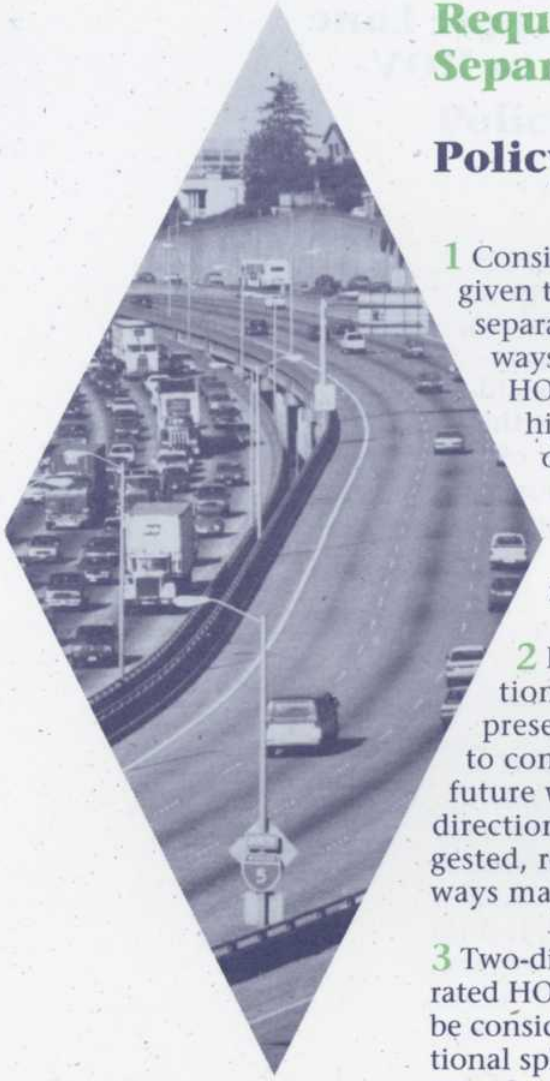


Policy

1 Exclusive HOV ramps with direct access to inside HOV lanes or physically separated HOV roadways optimize HOV system efficiency.

2 WSDOT shall establish financial strategies to cooperatively develop exclusive HOV ramp projects which will best benefit a region's HOV system.

3 WSDOT shall seek to work with local transit agencies and governments in the regions of the state to design policies and procedures leading to development of an exclusive HOV ramp program.



Requirements for Physically Separated HOV Facilities

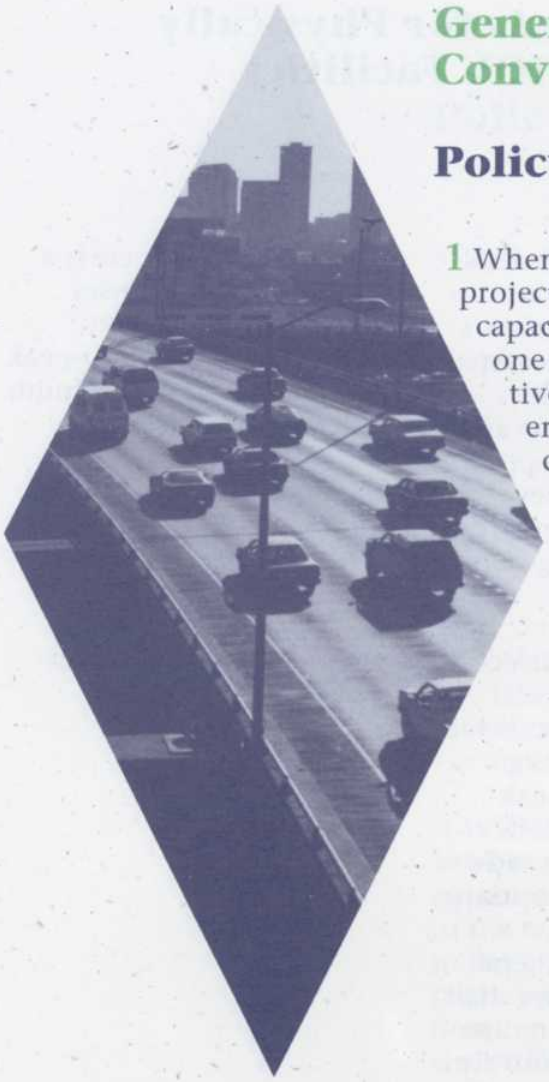
Policy

1 Consideration shall be given to physically separated HOV roadways when forecasted HOV demand is high, merging and/or weaving problems are severe or general purpose lane congestion is severe.

2 If strong directional flows are present and projected to continue in the future with off-peak directions rarely congested, reversible roadways may be appropriate.

3 Two-directional, separated HOV roadways shall be considered when directional splits are relatively even for the number of lanes present, there is a demand for ridesharing in both directions during peak hours, or there is a large volume of buses adversely affected by congestion in the off-peak hours or reverse commute direction.

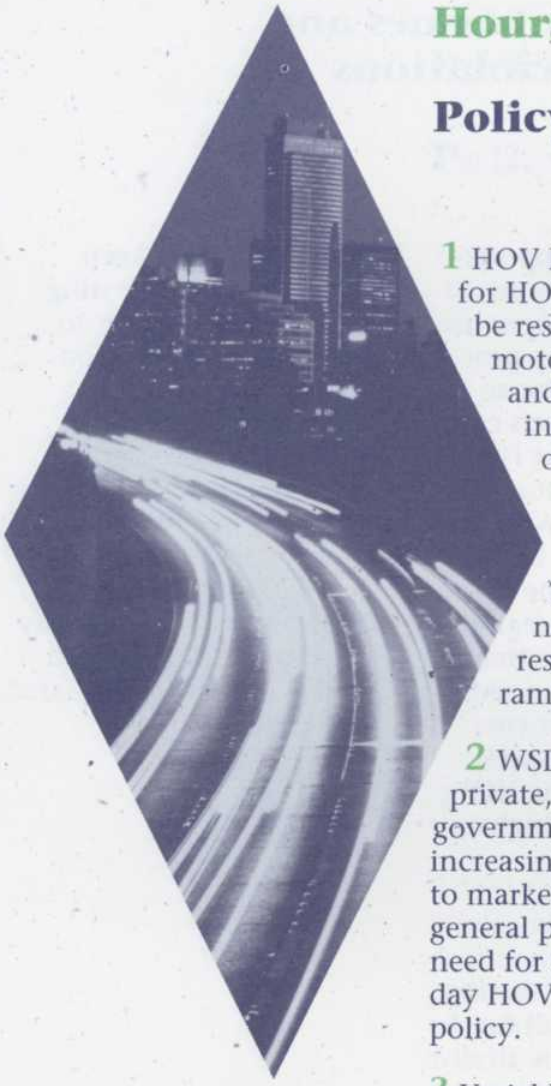
4 WSDOT shall establish financial strategies to cooperatively develop separated roadway facilities to enhance and benefit a region's HOV system.



General Purpose Lane Conversion to HOV

Policy

1 When proposing projects to address capacity deficiencies, one of the alternatives to be considered shall be the conversion of a general purpose lane to an HOV lane.



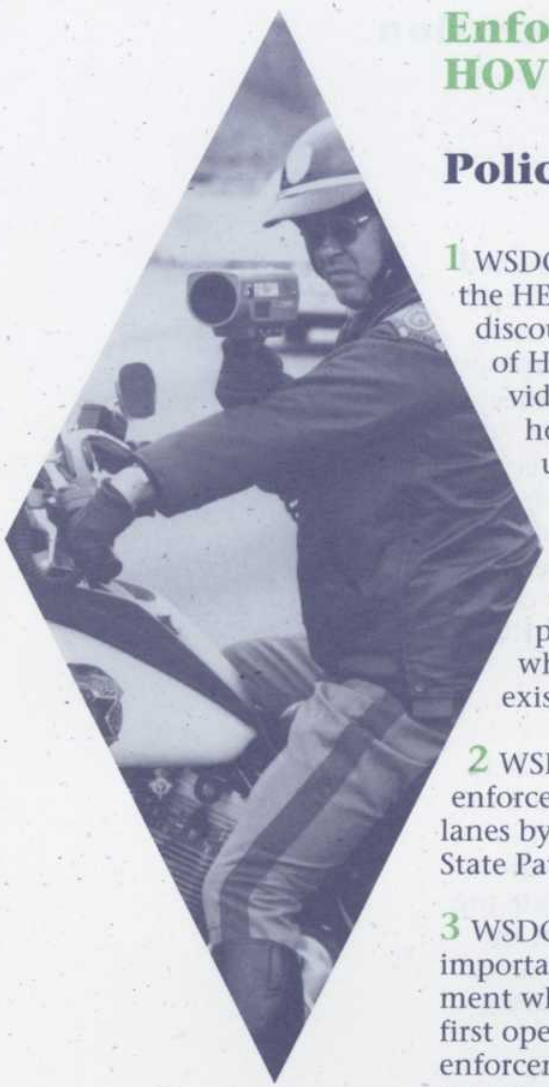
Hours of Operation

Policy

1 HOV lanes constructed for HOV purposes shall be reserved for buses, motorcycles, carpools and vanpools meeting minimum occupancy requirements, 24-hours per day, seven days a week. This policy does not apply to HOV restrictions on ramps.

2 WSDOT shall solicit private, transit and local government support in increasing regional efforts to market and educate the general public about the need for a 24-hour, seven-day HOV lane operating policy.

3 Variable carpool definitions may be based on time of day.



Enforcement Issues and HOV Lane Violations

Policy

1 WSDOT fully supports the HERO program to discourage improper use of HOV lanes by providing a telephone hotline citizens can use to report HOV lane violators. WSDOT will continue to promote the program in regions where HOV systems exist or are planned.

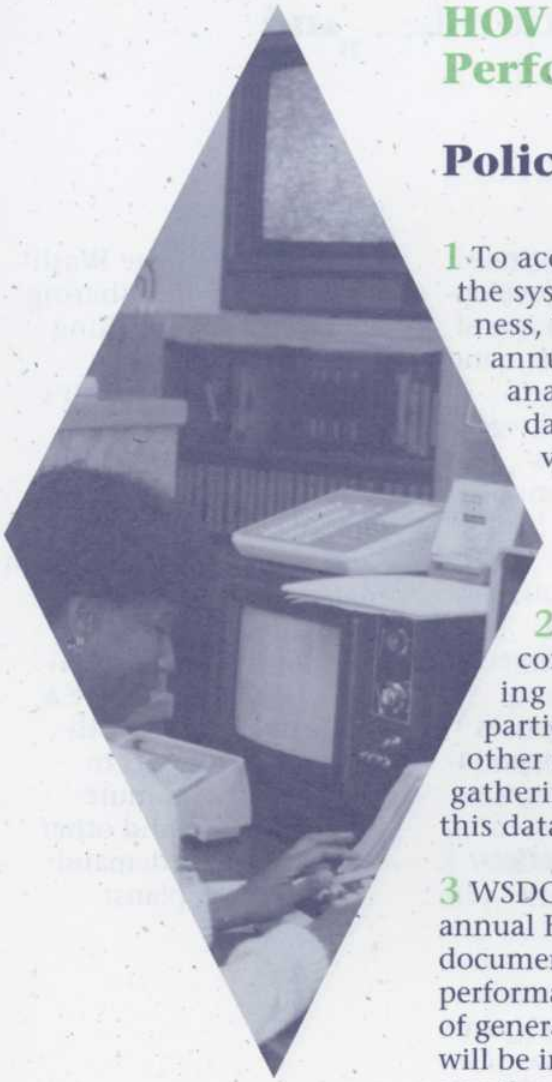
2 WSDOT encourages enforcement of the HOV lanes by the Washington State Patrol.

3 WSDOT recognizes the importance of enforcement when a HOV facility first opens and shall fund enforcement for the first six months of HOV lane operation.

4 WSDOT is committed to designing and constructing HOV facilities that incorporate safe enforcement features and solicit the Washington State Patrol's involvement in design and review of HOV lane development.

5 WSDOT shall keep regulations and signing clear and consistent to avoid driver confusion.

6 To deter violations, WSDOT shall assign a team to work with the Washington State Patrol to develop and propose legislation creating a separate citation category for HOV violations and which carries an increased, graduated penalty.



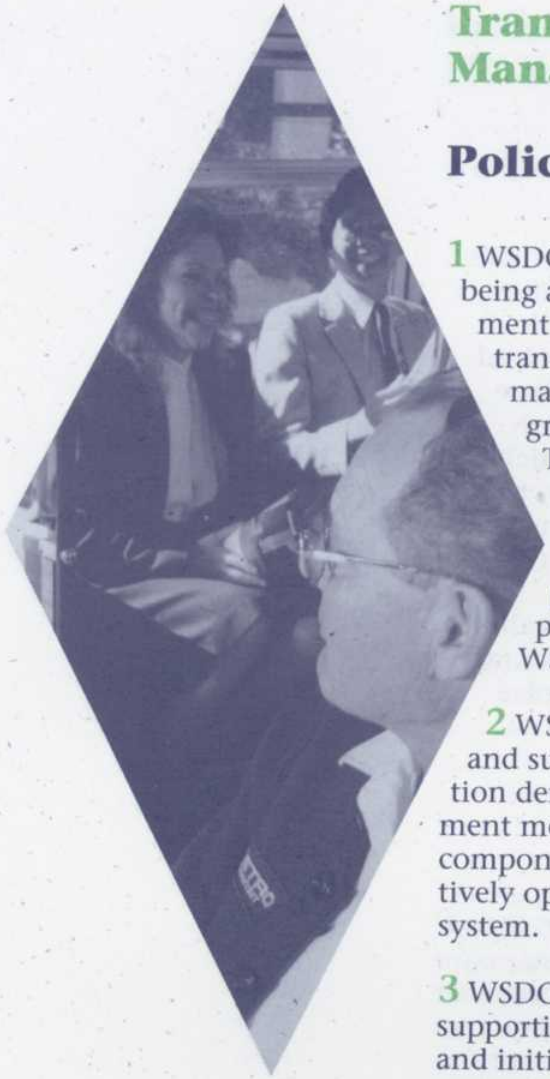
HOV System Performance

Policy

1 To accurately evaluate the system's effectiveness, WSDOT will annually collect and analyze HOV lane data including volume, vehicle occupancy, travel time savings and violation rates.

2 WSDOT shall continue encouraging support and participation from other agencies in the gathering and use of this data.

3 WSDOT shall prepare an annual HOV system report documenting system performance. Performance of general purpose lanes will be included for comparative purposes.



Transportation Demand Management

Policy

1 WSDOT shall continue being a leader in development and promotion of transportation demand management programs and strategies. This includes development of commute trip-reduction plans and other programs for WSDOT employees.

2 WSDOT recognizes and supports transportation demand management measures as essential components of an effectively operating HOV system.

3 WSDOT shall continue supporting other programs and initiatives designed to promote transportation demand management measures, similar to those established by the Washington State Ridesharing Organization and King County Economic Development Council's Commuter Challenge Campaign.

4 WSDOT shall promote and support transportation demand management legislation and lead the way for its implementation. WSDOT shall be a proactive partner with local governments in developing commute trip-reduction and other transportation demand management plans.

HOV System Marketing and Promotion

Policy

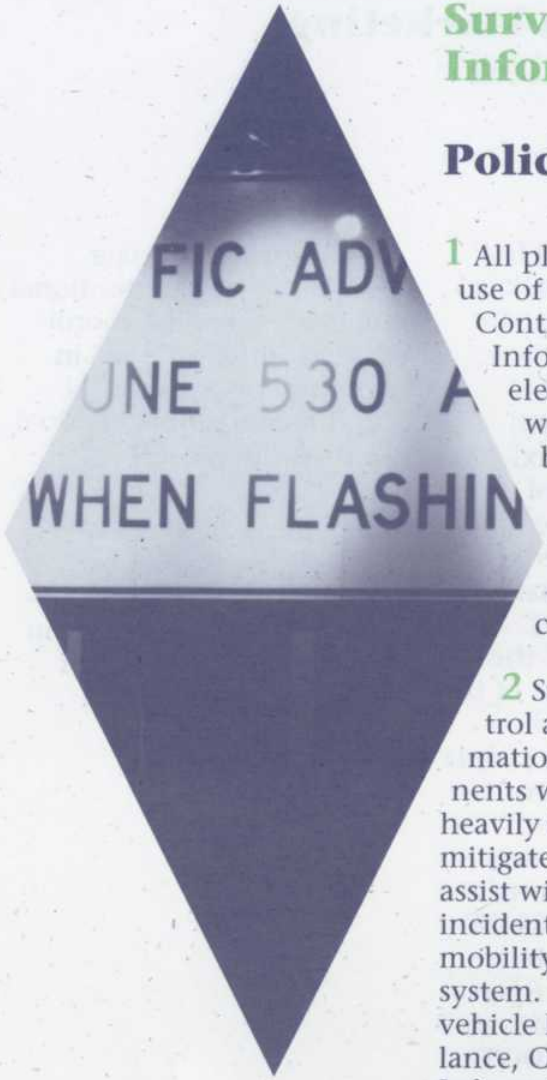
1 All activities shall be coordinated with all appropriate WSDOT public affairs offices.

2 WSDOT shall promote maximum use of the HOV system through education and marketing programs. Promotion of the positive aspects of the HOV system shall include targeting people not using the system.

3 WSDOT headquarters' divisions shall work with and through the WSDOT Office of Urban Mobility, WSDOT Public Transportation and Rail Division, and the appropriate WSDOT region offices to assure effective coordination of HOV promotions with transit agencies and local and regional governments.

4 Where appropriate, WSDOT HOV promotional activities shall be coordinated with and done in conjunction with local and regional jurisdictional efforts statewide.

5 Education and marketing elements shall be included in project development and construction expense for each major HOV project.



Surveillance, Control and Driver Information and HOV Bypass

Policy

1 All planning for and use of Surveillance, Control and Driver Information system elements on a freeway corridor shall be carried out through close coordination with local agencies within the corridor.

2 Surveillance, Control and Driver Information system components will be used in heavily congested areas to mitigate traffic congestion, assist with managing incidents and improve mobility on the freeway system. High occupancy vehicle lanes and Surveillance, Control and Driver Information systems will be constructed concurrently whenever possible.

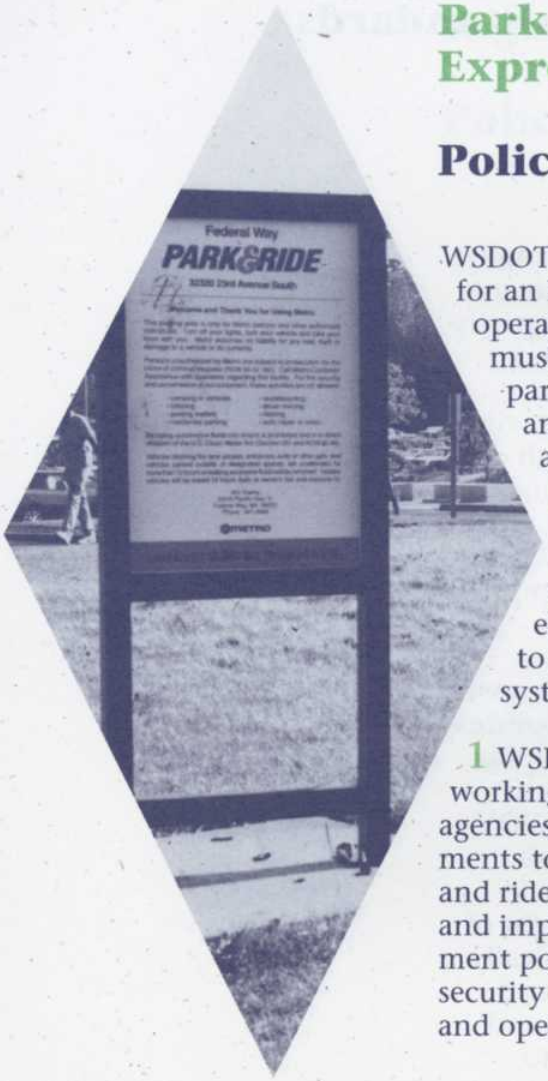
3 WSDOT shall review ramp metering justification during project development for all improvements to congested freeways in regions of the state where operating speeds are regularly less than 50 mph for at least one half hour during peak commute hours.

4 Ramp metering may be used as a technique to mitigate the effects of heavy congestion in the general purpose lanes.

5 WSDOT shall construct HOV bypasses when ramp metering is installed and operational studies show that a benefit to HOVs could be expected.

6 WSDOT shall continue to promote and implement elements of the incident management program.

Park and Ride Facilities and Express Transit Stations



Policy

WSDOT recognizes that for an HOV system to operate effectively there must be a network of park and ride lots and, where appropriate, express transit stations strategically located. Transit services must be adequately scheduled to support the HOV system elements.

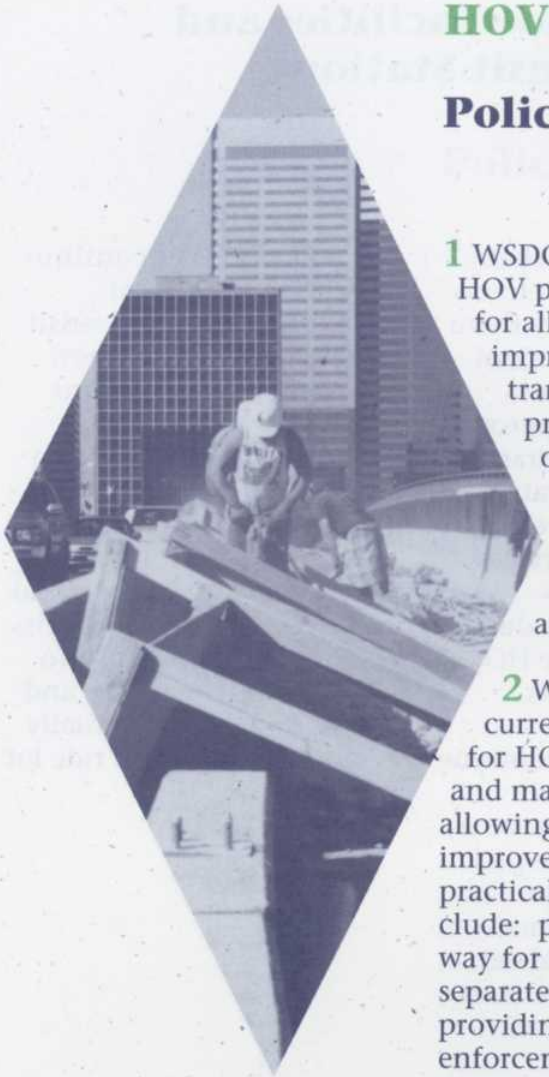
1 WSDOT shall continue working with transit agencies and local governments to coordinate park and ride lot development and implement management policies to address security and enforcement and operational issues.

2 WSDOT shall continue working with local governments and transit agencies to ensure new express transit stations and related transit facilities are designed to operate successfully.

3 WSDOT shall continue working with transit, local and regional jurisdictions, and the private sector to support site selection and development of mutually beneficial park and ride lot facilities.

HOV Design Standards

Policy

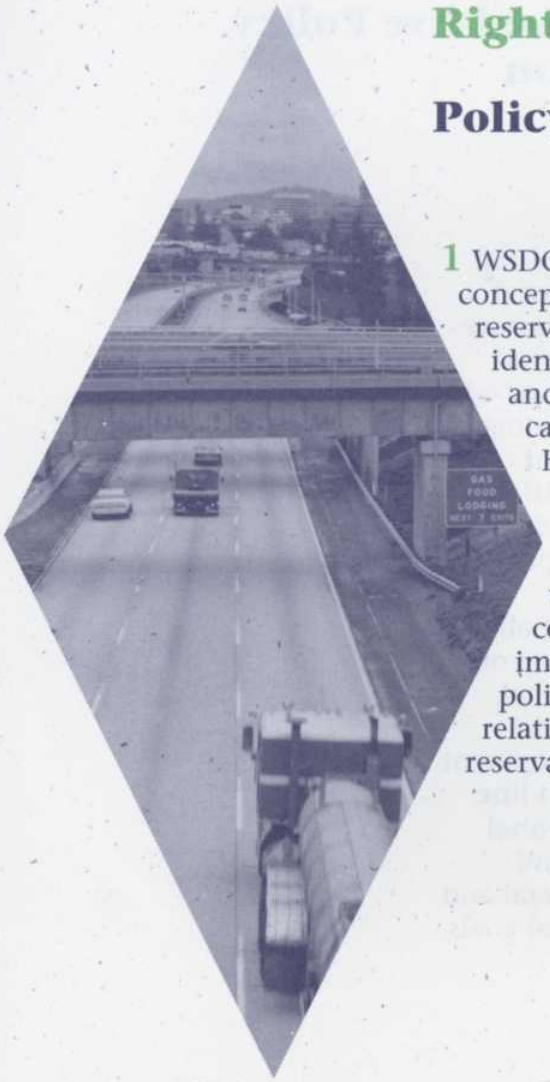


1 WSDOT shall encourage HOV priority treatments for all highway capacity improvement and transit benefit projects. This will occur through *Design Manual* guidelines which favor HOV system development and support.

2 WSDOT shall review current design policies for HOV lane facilities and make provisions allowing for future HOV improvements where practical. Examples include: providing right of way for future physically separated facilities and providing shoulder and enforcement areas to increase system safety elements.

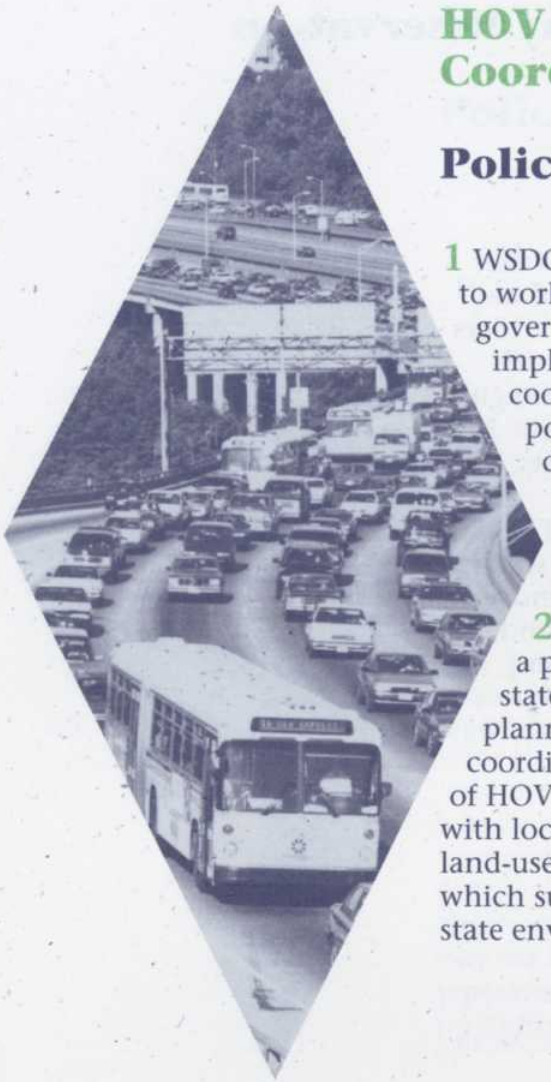
Right of Way Reservation

Policy



1 WSDOT supports the concept of right of way reservation in corridors identified for short and long term high capacity transit and HOV projects.

2 WSDOT shall continue seeking ways to remove constraints and improve current policy and practices relating to right of way reservation.



HOV and Land-Use Policy Coordination

Policy

1 WSDOT is committed to working with local governments to assure implementation of coordinated land-use policies encouraging development of HOV facilities that support adopted land-use policies.

2 WSDOT shall take a proactive role on state and regional planning levels to coordinate development of HOV systems in line with local and regional land-use policies and which support federal and state environmental goals.